

L12
SHARP and MURRAY's EDITION of THOMSON'S SEASONS.

PROPOSALS

FOR

PRINTING BY SUBSCRIPTION,

A CORRECT AND SPLENDID EDITION OF

THOMSON'S SEASONS;

WITH TWENTY-TWO

ELEGANT ENGRAVINGS,

TO BE EXECUTED

By Mr. SHARP,

FROM

ORIGINAL PICTURES,

PAINTED ENTIRELY FOR THIS WORK

By Mr. SMIRKE.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS are received by W. SHARP, No. 8, Charles Street, Middlesex Hospital; and
J. MURRAY, No. 32, Fleet Street; the Proprietors: also by R. SMIRKE, No. 64,
Charlotte Street, Rathbone Place; and WILLIAM SKELTON, Haymarket.**

*ZB Proposals
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CONDITIONS.

THE work will be completed in **FOUR NUMBERS**; printed in a superb manner, upon a Wove Paper of the first quality and texture, in Imperial or oblong Quarto; to which will be prefixed Dr. AIKIN's ingenious Essay upon the Plan and Character of the Poem.

Each Number will contain, as nearly as can be calculated, about Fifteen Sheets of Letter-Press; Three large Engravings of the size undermentioned; and Two or more smaller Engravings, according to circumstances. The Title will be ornamented in a manner equally new and beautiful.

The Numbers will be delivered with a scrupulous regard to priority of Subscription.

The size of the large plates will be 8 inches by $9\frac{1}{4}$.

The PAINTINGS will be submitted to the Inspection of the Public as soon as they are finished.

Two GUINEAS to be paid at the time of Subscribing, for which a stamped receipt will be given; and the same sum on delivery of every Number except the last, which will be delivered without any additional demand.

The work being in forwardness, the First Number is expected to be ready for publication on or before the First of MAY 1793.

TO THE PUBLIC.

WERE any apology necessary for the present undertaking, the sentiments of Dr. Johnson might be quoted with propriety.—‘As a writer,’ says he, ‘THOMSON is entitled to praise of the highest kind. His mode of thinking and expressing his thoughts is original. His blank verse is no more the blank verse of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauses, his diction, are of his own growth; without transcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train; and he thinks always as a man of genius. He looks round on Nature, and on life, with the eye which Nature bestows only on a poet; the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to his view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained; and with a mind that at once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. The reader of the SEASONS wonders that he never saw before what THOMSON shews him, and that he never has felt what THOMSON impresses.’—‘His description of extended scenes and general effects brings before us the whole magnificence of Nature, whether pleasing or dreadful. The gaiety of Spring, the splendour of Summer, the tranquillity of Autumn, and the horror of Winter, take in turns possession of the mind. The Poet leads us through the appearances of things as they are successively varied

by the vicissitudes of the year: and imparts to us so much of his own enthusiasm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery, and kindle with his sentiments.'----*Johnson's Lives of the Poets*.

This liberal encomium, and that from a Critic more remarkable for his antipathy than his partiality to the literature and genius of our Author's country, renders every thing which the Proprietors might justly add unnecessary. The uniform voice of literature has, in this instance, sanctioned the voice of Johnson. All therefore that remains to the Proprietors is the grateful task of presenting to the Public an Edition of THOMSON'S SEASONS, in which the elegance of the Execution shall equal the elegance of the POET. To promise more would be to promise what could not be performed.

The ENGRAVINGS will *all* be executed by Mr. SHARP, who, being himself a Proprietor, will have every motive to stimulate his best exertions, and to preserve the reputation he has acquired.

The LETTER-PRESS will be superintended by Mr. MURRAY, with the most scrupulous care and attention; and every method taken to render this Edition of the SEASONS worthy of the present æra, distinguished for munificence and a liberal patronage of the Arts.